

14 December 1949.

Memorandum to: AD/ORE

1. Reference is made to EPB Notice No. 2-49, dated 9 December, 1949.

2. My comments on "A Concept of National Intelligence Production on the Far East" are as follows:

a. This approach to the problem of planning intelligence production involves the risk, it seems to me, of erecting an elaborate building upon what may prove to be a false foundation. An estimate of the situation has, in effect, been made and future production planned to develop this estimate. I think a different interpretation of the Far Eastern situation might be selected, and then the plan would require considerable modification. For example, it is possible, in my opinion, that the Kremlin is considerably worried about the creation of a power complex in the Far East which could be a serious rival to Soviet ambitions. There is no reason to suppose that communist states cannot have conflicting interests and go to war as capitalist nations have. A disorganized Far Eastern area, which tends to drain off Western power resources, may serve Russian purposes better than the attempt to create a remote power center the ultimate control of which is by no means assured. It seems to me, therefore, that while the estimate made in the subject paper may well be the correct one it is not necessarily so, and intelligence production could be directed along unrealistic lines.

b. The concept, in my opinion, does not give enough attention to Far Eastern developments only indirectly unrelated to the US/USSR struggle which may affect US security -- e.g., a revival of an aggressive Japanese nationalism. Such developments may appear remote, but there is a danger, it seems to me, that an intelligence plan focused entirely on a current situation, the US/USSR conflict, will overlook something which may grow quickly into a major security problem.

c. For a long-range production plan, I would prefer to see set forth several possible lines of area development of significance to US security and research and estimates proposed which would keep all these under review. Such a plan, I believe, would minimize the danger of selecting an interpretation which appears currently valid and producing intelligence to support it.

d. In so far as the proposed concept provides for a continuing assessment of the "human and material potentials of the Far East"

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I think it is on sound ground. This is a proper intelligence function and such assessments are needed for all estimates based on assumptions arising out of current developments.



Northern Division

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